

## **HEMI-SYNC® IN SUPPORT OF A CONFLICT-MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP**

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*As a licensed professional counselor, James Akenhead has been a public-and private-sector organizational consultant for fifteen years. A career educator for thirty years, with twenty-four years of service as a school superintendent, he holds five degrees and has published numerous articles on leadership, team building, management, and human relations. Dr. Akenhead has served as coordinator of a graduate administration degree program and has taught graduate courses in administration and counseling for eighteen years. Jim is presently director of The Ohio Network: Training and Assistance for Schools and Communities. This paper discusses the application of Hemi-Sync technology, in four different formats, to enhance the instructional environment during the delivery of a conflict-management workshop for administrators. An overview of workshop content objectives is presented, as are the results of a basic statistical analysis of participants' perceptions.*

As a career educator and consultant for more than thirty years, I am continually interested in methods to enhance instruction in professional workshops, seminars, and presentations. After facilitating several hundred workshops, I consider anything that helps tired and sometimes burned-out people get more out of presentations. Ways of improving content presentation, adding humor, and varying instructional techniques and processes all receive attention. Last summer I experimented with yet another dimension to aid workshop participants in getting the most for their time and effort. This project involved the use of Hemi-Sync® for enhancing the delivery of a workshop on conflict management.

### **Workshop Objectives**

The workshop objectives were threefold. Clearly, a primary focus was to provide the participants—a group of school administrators—with the skills and understanding necessary to make them better conflict managers. In addition, I wanted to use the Hemi-Sync technology to enhance the workshop learning environment and to give the administrators a tool they could use to maintain a “centered” state in which they would be able to deal more effectively with conflict situations (in much the same way that an athlete’s personal state contributes to performance).

### **Content**

The curriculum for the conflict-management phase of the workshop included a personality style analysis of each participant and a comparison of each participant’s style with a hypothetical style profile deemed to be highly productive in managing conflict situations. Following the style

analysis, participants were given lectures, structured activities, and simulations that acquainted them with the nature of conflict and methods for conflict resolution.

### **Hemi-Sync Technology**

At the beginning of the workshop, participants were told that Hemi-Sync would be used to enrich the workshop environment and to provide them with some personal resources that could be helpful to them in actual conflict situations. Technical aspects were explained briefly. The explanation included information on brainwave technology, including the discovery and development of the Frequency Following Response and its capacity to support productive brain-wave patterns.

### ***Concentration***

The *Concentration* tape was used during the lectures and question-and-answer portions of sessions. The technology and rationale were explained, and the volume was raised so the tape sound could be heard. Thereafter, the volume was adjusted to fade into the background.

### ***METAMUSIC***

Participants were told that *METAMUSIC* would be used during small group discussions and breaks. Selections included *Cloudscapes* and *Daybreak*. Participants were assured that there were no subliminal messages on the *METAMUSIC* tapes.

### ***Exploring***

*Exploring* (with Hemi-Sync) from the series *Journeys into Creative Problem Solving*, developed by Applied Creative Leadership Systems, Inc., was introduced during the last phase of the workshop. This provided people with an additional resource for creating and exploring options for use in problem solving and in planning related to conflict situations.

### ***H-PLUS*<sup>®</sup>**

The Prep side of *H-PLUS Relax* was introduced as a system for bringing about full-body relaxation when the required time and privacy were available. The *Relax* side of the tape was presented as a means to learn a personal code or anchor that could effect a relaxation response in almost any situation without the need for a prolonged process. This kind of personal code was compared to a person's consistent response to a favorite song. It was suggested that, once developed, the *H-PLUS* code would initiate the relaxation response in the same way a favorite song initiates a particularly positive feeling.

To make participants as comfortable as possible with this new experience, everything on the tape—including the wording and the rationale for each side of the tape—was explained. Each

person had been asked to bring a Walkman®-type stereo player to the workshop. Tape use was a scheduled part of the activities. On the first day, participants listened to *Prep* before lunch. They agreed to listen to it again that evening. *Prep* was also used before lunch and on the evening of the second day. At lunchtime on the third day, participants heard the *Relax* side of the tape for the first time. They were then encouraged to begin using the code [Function Command] whenever they wanted to bring about personal relaxation.

### **Participant Perceptions of Hemi-Sync**

It was decided to evaluate the Hemi-Sync technology through the perceptions of the participants. Each person was asked to complete a personal perception form, giving his or her reactions to each of the Hemi-Sync applications. Thirteen of the fifteen participants completed the form. Two had to leave the workshop early because of unexpected business problems.

### **Statistical Analysis**

To derive maximum usefulness from the perception evaluation, a statistical analysis was performed. Anytime an opinion is asked, a perception is recorded, or a measurement is made, some differences will occur on the basis of “chance” only. A statistical analysis uses mathematical formulas to determine if the differences in response are most likely related to chance or if they are most likely “real,” and therefore more useful in drawing conclusions about the project or experiment.

In this case, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistical test was selected as particularly appropriate for examining the difference between how a group would normally be expected to respond and how they actually respond. Each area of the perception form was examined.

Area I—The Hemi-Sync *Concentration* tape used during lectures and presentations had the following effect on my ability to focus on content material:

#### **Expected Distribution**

Distracted Me	0
Normal Focus	13
More Focused	0

#### **Actual Responses**

Distracted Me	2
Normal Focus	8
More Focused	3

Statistical analysis of this area indicated that the differences in responses were likely due to chance. For this reason, we could not conclude that the *Concentration* tape accounted for the differences in perception.

Area II—The use of *METAMUSIC* before, during, and after group discussions had the following effect on my level of comfort and productivity:

**Expected Distribution**

More Uncomfortable	0
Normal Comfort	13
More Comfortable	0

**Actual Responses**

More Uncomfortable	1
Normal Comfort	7
More Comfortable	5

Statistical analysis of this area indicated that the differences in responses were likely due to chance. For this reason, we could not conclude that the use of *METAMUSIC* tapes accounted for the differences in perception.

Area III—The use of the *Exploring* tape for increasing creativity in planning or problem solving had the following effect on me:

**Expected Distribution**

Felt Less Creative	0
Felt Normal Creativity	13
Felt More Creative	0

**Actual Responses**

Felt Less Creative	3
Felt Normal Creativity	9
Felt More Creative	1

Statistical analysis of this area indicated that the differences in responses were likely due to chance. For this reason, we could not conclude that the *Exploring* tape accounted for the differences in perception.

Area IV—The use of the *H-PLUS* process for producing a relaxation response had the following effect on me:

### Expected Distribution

Less Relaxed	0
Normal Relaxation	13
Increased Relaxation	0

### Actual Responses

Less Relaxed	0
Normal Relaxation	3
Increased Relaxation	10

Statistical analysis of this area indicated that the differences in responses were not likely due to chance. For this reason, we may state that the use of the *H-PLUS* tape accounted for the differences in the perceptions of the participants.

### General Conclusions

*Concentration*—Based on analysis of participants' perceptions about the effects of various tapes during the workshop, the *Concentration* tape was not perceived as affecting the focus or alertness of the group. It was noted, however, that due to the nature of this tape, personal perception may not be the best way to evaluate its effectiveness. A system to evaluate an actual increase in skill or knowledge following use might be more appropriate. Even though the statistical analysis did not indicate an impact on participants' ability to focus more intently, the facilitators believed that there may have been more impact than was perceived. The reason for this conclusion: although conditions in the workshop environment were hot and humid, participants seemed well focused. Normally, this type of setting would have worn down their attention span. Some distraction was noticed when Bob Monroe's voice became audible as the tape recycled on the auto-reverse equipment.

*METAMUSIC*—Participants thought *METAMUSIC* selections, including *Cloudscapes* and *Daybreak*, had a positive effect on their levels of productivity and relaxation during small group discussion sessions and breaks. Workshop facilitators felt that the music was enjoyable for all, including the instructors. Standard stereo equipment (with four speakers, one in each corner of the room) was used for sound delivery. No problems occurred relative to the use of the music tapes.

*Exploring*—Use of this tape for guided imagery and for enhancing creativity in planning and problem solving was not perceived as helpful by the group. Facilitators attributed this response to placement in the workshop format and time constraints. *Exploring* was introduced at the end of the workshop, time was short, and the room was very hot and humid. These factors were not conducive to creating an environment for optimal use. The tape will be used in the future with a better understanding of the conditions that would maximize its impact.

*H-PLUS*—The *Prep* side of *H-PLUS Relax* was perceived by participants to have an impact on their state of relaxation. Many people mentioned this effect. Approximately fifty percent said they could not believe anything could relax them to the degree that was accomplished. There was insufficient time to assess uniformity of results with the Function Command. However, several comments indicated that the relaxation response was present when it was used.

### **Summary and Personal Observations**

Facilitators believed that the Hemi-Sync technology used in this project enhanced the delivery of the conflict management seminar. Statistical analysis is basic in nature and is built on the personal perceptions of the participants rather than on hard data. Even the basic statistical approach employed in this instance added an additional portion of credibility to the conclusions drawn.

Problems were minimal. Obtaining personal tape players for each individual was more of a logistical difficulty than was anticipated. Moving the stereo equipment in and setting it up went smoothly. Careful orientation resolved most questions about the nature and intent of the tapes. Some did see the tapes as similar to hypnosis; one person feared a conflict with personal Christian beliefs. These concerns arose despite the careful orientation, which will be repeated at succeeding seminars. The technology is demonstrating its value and will see continued use with those interested in improving their personal performance and satisfaction.

### **REFERENCES**

Coulson, Louis T., & Strickland, Alison. 1990. *Journeys into Creative Problem Solving: Inviting Insights and Inventing Ideas through Imagery*. Seminole, Fla.: Applied Creative Learning Systems, Inc.

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